

HCS HB 677 -- SCHOOL CALENDAR

SPONSOR: Rowland (155)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 13 to 0.

Currently, public schools are required to be in session for a minimum of 174 days and 1,044 hours. Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, this bill changes the requirement to a minimum of 1,044 hours of actual pupil attendance with no minimum number of required school days except for kindergarten pupils who must be provided a minimum of 522 hours of actual pupil attendance with no minimum number of days.

Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, when determining the amount of state aid to the Division of Youth Services in the Department of Social Services for educational services to elementary and secondary students who have been assigned to the division by the courts and who have been determined as inappropriate for local public school attendance, the number of full-time equivalent students must be determined by dividing 1,044 hours by the number of student hours. A student hour must mean one hour of education services provided for one student.

Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, each school calendar must include 36 make-up hours for possible loss of attendance due to inclement weather. A school district may be exempt from the requirement to make up school lost or canceled due to inclement weather when the district has made up the required 36 hours and half the number of additional lost or canceled hours up to 48, resulting in no more than 60 total make-up hours. The Commissioner of Education within the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education may provide, upon request, a waiver for any school district to be excused from the 1,044 hours of actual pupil attendance requirement.

Currently, a school with a five-day school week may not exceed a seven hour school day or eight hour school day for specified districts. The bill removes this provision.

Effective July 1, 2018, certain provisions relating to a school district establishing a four-day school week are repealed. However, provisions remain in statute that continue to allow a district to establish a four-day school week.

This bill is similar to HB 135 (2015).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that all this bill is doing is changing the day requirement of 174 days to an hour requirement of 1,044 hours. It doesn't affect four day school (it doesn't prohibit school districts from having them) weeks or inclement weather provisions. It gives schools more flexibility in making their calendar and to do what's best for their students.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Rowland; School Administrators Coalition; Missouri School Board Association; Missouri National Education Association; and Missouri State Teachers Association.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

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